

Vashon Island/Downtown Seattle • West Seattle/Downtown Seattle

King County Water Taxi News



The Doc Maynard, Sally Fox, and Spirit of Kingston sail together for a photo op!

MV Doc Maynard completes the fleet (for now)

The arrival in September of the MV Doc Maynard marked a proud moment for the King County Water Taxi. We now own two new vessels, one 10-year-old back-up vessel, and a highly functional moorage and maintenance barge. Quite a change from three years ago, when our fleet consisted of two nearly-25-year-old leased vessels and our engineering team operated out of a storage container on Pier 50.

A September 19 dedication event at Pier 50 celebrated the arrival of the *Doc Maynard*. Honored guests who have been leaders in developing the Water Taxi—County Executive Dow Constantine, County Councilmember Joe McDermott, and former Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels—commented on our history and growth. An inaugural cruise around Elliott Bay capped the festivities.

After upgrades to the Seacrest Dock are completed in mid-December (see article below), the *MV Sally Fox* will operate on the Vashon route and the *Doc Maynard* on the West Seattle route. The *MV Spirit of Kingston* will provide back-up service. When one of the main



Executive Dow Constantine and Councilmember Joe McDermott join guests on the bow of the *Doc Maynard* for its inaugural voyage.

vessels is removed from service, the other will sail on the Vashon route and the *Spirit of Kingston* will sail on the West Seattle route.

The new vessels will enhance the reliability of our fleet and give us the capacity to welcome many new riders to our Water Taxi family!

Seacrest Dock gets prepped for the Doc

Work crews are making improvements to Seacrest Dock so that the new *Doc Maynard* can safely tie up and load/ offload passengers there. The work began Dec. 5 and



is likely to take about two weeks. It will not interrupt service.

The modifications include strengthening the pile collars, adding mooring cleats, upgrading fenders, and fabricating a new, ADA-compliant boarding ramp.

After the work is completed, Water Taxi crews will conduct testing and training on the route for about two weeks. We expect the *Doc Maynard* to start serving the West Seattle run in early January.

King County is paying for the improvements to the City of Seattle-owned dock.



Water Taxi vessels sport a new logo

Regular riders likely noticed that when the *Doc Maynard* arrived, we changed the logo on all King County Water Taxi vessels.



Old logo, 2009-2015

Gone is the "toy boat" logo, created by the King County Ferry District when it began operating the Water Taxi six years ago.

To increase efficiency and simplify oversight of the Water Taxi, the Ferry District was dissolved earlier this year and King County assumed governance. The new logo reflects the Water Taxi's place in the King County family of public transportation services.

You'll see our new look continue to emerge over the next couple of years as we update and replace signs, uniforms, and materials.

Is expansion in the Water Taxi's future?

The Marine Division, which manages the King County Water Taxi, recently submitted a report to the King County Council that identified three potential new Water Taxi routes.

The Council requested the report in 2014, when it adopted the County's 2015-16 biennial budget. Council members asked the Marine Division to assess possibilities for expanding Water Taxi service on both Puget Sound and Lake Washington.

With the help of consulting firm KPFF, the division initially identified 36 possible route combinations. After applying screening criteria, projecting expected

ridership, and estimating fare revenue, three routes emerged as having potential.

Two of these are on Lake Washington, one operating from Kenmore and one from Kirkland, both serving the University of Washington's Waterfront Activities Center (southeast of the stadium parking lot). These routes would connect riders to Sound Transit's Link light rail service to downtown Seattle, scheduled to start service in March 2016.

The third route, on Puget Sound, would connect Ballard, at Shilshole Marina, with Pier 50, the current Water Taxi terminal in downtown Seattle.

The report was submitted to the Council on Nov. 25 and likely will be heard by the Transportation, Economy and Environment (TrEE) Committee in early 2016.

Bids out for Vashon dock walkway cover

The Marine Division is currently seeking bids for construction of a weather-protection cover on the walkway at the Vashon Water Taxi dock.

This is the third attempt this year to procure a contract for the project. The first attempt resulted in no responsive bids, and the second resulted in higher-than-expected bids and a schedule that conflicted with Washington State Ferries' seismic upgrade project at the terminal.

WSF has given the Water Taxi a window of opportunity to build the cover in the first quarter of 2016, between phases of WSF's project. If the latest bid process is successful, the work would be done at this time to minimize impacts for both WSF and Water Taxi customers.

2015 Water Taxi ridership—a half million and counting

By the time 2015 draws to a close, we expect that the King County Water Taxi's ridership for the year will exceed half a million passengers—a record high. A new, larger vessel on the Vashon route and marketing of the West Seattle route contributed to the increase.

Growth was consistent throughout the year.

We're proud that the Water Taxi is contributing to efforts to improve mobility in King County.

2014/2015 Water Taxi Ridership

	Vashon Island			West Seattle			Combined		
Month	2014	2015	%	2014	2015	%	2014	2015	%
Jan	16,351	15,160	-7.3%	8,732	8,827	1.1%	25,083	23,987	-4.4%
Feb	13,144	14,137	7.6%	11,438	8,906	-22.1%	24,582	23,043	-6.3%
Mar	15,637	16,790	7.4%	8,504	11,992	41.0%	24,141	28,782	19.2%
Apr	15,865	17,304	9.1%	19,160	23,370	22.0%	35,025	40,674	16.1%
May	15,561	16,003	2.8%	27,417	32,990	20.3%	42,978	48,993	14.0%
Jun	15,692	18,261	16.4%	32,484	43,494	33.9%	48,176	61,755	28.2%
Jul	16,669	18,815	12.9%	49,725	51,559	3.7%	66,394	70,374	6.0%
Aug	15,857	17,933	13.1%	53,802	51,356	-4.5%	69,659	69,289	-0.5%
Sep	15,542	17,747	14.2%	34,572	35,173	1.7%	50,114	52,920	5.6%
0ct	17,279	18,666	8.0%	20,752	25,569	23.2%	38,031	44,235	16.3%
Nov	13,125	15,028	14.5%	7,760	10,130	30.5%	20,885	25,158	20.5%
Dec	13,735			8,316			22,051	0	·
Total	184,457	185,844		282,662	303,366		467,119	489,210	

Water Taxi Annual Ridership

Year	Vashon	West Seattle	Combined
2005	175,269	106,913	282,182
2006	131,996	122,650	254,646
2007	125,033	161,331	286,364
2008	121,169	182,904	304,073
2009	110,703	216,196	326,899
2010	153,620	154,020	307,640
2011	167,619	216,155	383,774
2012	177,970	250,317	428,287
2013	187,824	257,286	445,110
2014	184,457	282,662	467,119
2015*	185,844	303,366	489,210

*thru November

Fun fact:

From April through November 2015, 264 of the *Sally Fox's* 976 commute-direction sailings (27%) had more than 172 passengers (the *Melissa Ann's* capacity).

www.kingcounty.gov/watertaxi

We welcome your comments. Contact us at watertaxi.info@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-3979.

Alternative formats available 206-477-3832 (TTY Relay: 711)